

Application Serial No. 10/687,280
Reply to Final Office Action of November 2, 2005

REMARKS

The application has been reviewed and revised in light of the Office Action mailed on November 2, 2005. By this amendment, Claims 2, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 10-17 have been amended, and Claims 1, 18-20 and 22 have been canceled. It is respectfully submitted that the claims pending in the application, namely, Claims 2-17 and 21, are fully supported by the specification, introduce no new subject matter, are patentably distinct over the prior art and do not require a new search. In view of the amendments above and the remarks to follow, reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the allowance of independent Claim 21.

In the Office Action, Claims 16 and 17 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. The Applicants note with appreciation the Examiner's indication that Claims 16 and 17 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any other intervening claims. Claim 16 has been rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of canceled base Claim 1. Claim 17 has been amended to remove the language "further comprising" and the language "configured in opposing directions and;" and to insert the language "wherein the." It is respectfully submitted that these claims are now in condition for allowance. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the objection to these claims be withdrawn and these claims be allowed.

Application Serial No. 10/687,280
Reply to Final Office Action of November 2, 2005

Rejection of Claims 1, 2, 5-13, 15, 18-20 and 22 under 35 U.S.C. § 102

In the Office Action, Claims 1, 2, 5-13, 15, 18-20 and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Shreesha (U.S. Patent No. 5,798,516). By the present amendment, the Applicants have canceled Claims 1 and 18-20 without prejudice. The Applicants expressly reserve the right to present the canceled claims in one or more continuation applications. In addition, Claims 2, 5, 6, 8, 10-13 and 15 have been amended to depend from allowable independent Claim 16. It is respectfully submitted that these claims are also in condition for allowance. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of these claims be withdrawn.

Rejection of Claims 3, 4 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 102

In the Office Action, Claims 3 and 4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shreesha in view of Koenck (U.S. Patent No. 5,576,529). It is respectfully submitted that Claims 3 and 4 depend directly from amended Claim 2. Claim 2 has been amended to depend from allowable independent Claim 16. It is respectfully submitted that Claims 3 and 4 are also in condition for allowance. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of these claims be withdrawn.

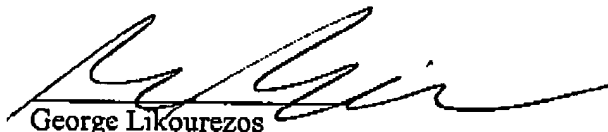
In the Office Action, Claim 14 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shreesha in view of Carlson et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,837,431). By the present amendment, Claim 14 has been amended to depend directly from allowable independent Claim 16. It is respectfully submitted that Claim 14 is also in condition for allowance. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of this claim be withdrawn.

Application Serial No. 10/687,280
Reply to Final Office Action of November 2, 2005

Conclusion

Two independent claims remain in the application, namely Claims 16 and 21. Claim 16 has been rewritten in independent to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims as recommended by the Examiner, and independent Claim 21 has been indicated to contain allowable subject matter, therefore it is believed that a new search is not required and that the application is now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, early and favorable consideration of this application is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner believe that a telephone or personal interview may facilitate resolution of any remaining matters, he is respectfully requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully Submitted,



George Likourezos
Reg. No. 40,067
Attorney for Applicants

CARTER DeLUCA, FARRELL & SCHMIDT, LLP
445 Broad Hollow Road
Suite 225
Melville, N.Y. 11747
Phone: (631) 501-5706
Fax: (631) 501-3526